

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE
AND THE GROUP MANAGER, PLANNING****SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 10 DECEMBER 2012 TO 13 JANUARY
2013****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Committee on a range of initiatives being undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people.

Information and Advice**LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND INFORMATION****Digital Skills Sharing Project**

2. Nottinghamshire Libraries is one of only 6 library authorities throughout the country chosen through a competitive bidding process to participate in an innovative project partnering library authorities with publishers. We were partnered with Penguin and Hot Key Books, and have been running a competition for young people in the West Bridgford area to design a digital campaign for a teenage title provided by the publishers. Following work with the Youth Service and local schools, we have received a number of entries which have now been judged. The winning entry will receive books and a trip to Penguin's Media Suite in London to work professionally on their entry, whilst runners up will be invited to purchase young people's stock for the new West Bridgford Library.

TRY IT sessions

3. The Library Service continue to offer TRY IT sessions to the public. Individuals can book 1:1 hour long sessions to either gain knowledge on how to use computers and/or to extend their knowledge.
4. The total number of TRY IT sessions delivered between October and December 2012 was 835. 271 sessions were delivered by Library staff and a further 564 sessions were delivered by RCAN IT Champions (i.e. volunteers).
5. During 2011-12, 1,317 sessions ran in total; this figure has been equalled by December 2012.
6. There is a high degree of satisfaction shown by customers, 99.1% being satisfied/very satisfied that their confidence in computer use had increased.

7. The majority of customers are female and over 55 years of age. Most attend sessions for their own interest, to keep in touch with family or to research family history. However, an increasing number of customers report that they are using their new found skills to assist them in looking for work
8. 44% of customers had to wait for over three weeks for their first session: a recent round of staff training in delivering TRY IT should help reduce this waiting period. In addition Libraries can access support from ACLS (Adult & Community Learning Service) if they have large waiting lists.

Savile of Rufford archives

9. Following the death of the previous Lord Savile in 2008, the Savile of Rufford family archives were accepted in lieu of Inheritance Tax by H M Government in January 2011. The National Archives has now recommended that it be permanently allocated to Nottinghamshire Archives. This recommendation has been accepted and the Secretary of State has now transferred legal title to the papers to the County Council.
10. The collections now held at Nottinghamshire Archives relate to estates built up by the Savile family in the West Riding of Yorkshire from the Middle Ages to the 17th century, and subsequently augmented by the inheritance of the former Rufford Abbey estates in Nottinghamshire in 1626 through marriage into the Talbot family, Earls of Shrewsbury. The records were removed from Rufford Abbey prior to the Second World War and subsequently catalogued by the National Register of Archives in London in the 1940s and 1950s. They were returned to the County and deposited in the Nottinghamshire Records Office (now Nottinghamshire Archives) in 1957, with subsequent additional deposits added in 1960, 1974 and 1982 and most recently the contents of the Savile estate office were transferred in 2012.
11. The great majority of the archive comprises mediaeval, Tudor and Stuart charters, deeds and leases and manorial and related estate records of properties in some fifteen counties, the majority in Nottinghamshire and West Yorkshire. The other records include family settlements, wills and legal papers regarding various subjects such as boundaries, enclosure, 17th and 18th century coal mining and Sherwood Forest.
12. The collection includes an especially fine series of mediaeval charters for Rufford Abbey from the 12th century onwards which are amongst the oldest records held by Nottinghamshire Archives.
13. Other groups of note are a full and detailed series of kitchen and pantry books for Thornhill Hall and (later) Rufford Abbey from 1623 to 1681, recording all the food and drink purchased and consumed on a daily basis. For the 19th century there are diplomatic and personal letters and papers of Sir John, later Lord Savile (1818-1896) who served as British ambassador in Russia, Italy and elsewhere and who undertook notable archaeological excavations on the site of the Temple of Nemi near Rome, presenting many of his finds to Nottingham Castle Museum.

Libraries, Archives and Information publications

14. The latest local history publication was launched on 17 December. 'Time Gentlemen Please, Village Public Houses in South Nottinghamshire in days gone by' by Bernard V Heathcote covers the history of 50 public houses in 11 villages of south Nottinghamshire: Bulcote, Burton Joyce, Calverton, Caythorpe, Epperstone, Gonalston, Gunthorpe, Lambley, Lowdham, Oxtun and Woodborough. The launch was carried out by the Chairman of the County Council in the World's End Inn, Lowdham, which features on the front cover of the book.
15. 'A Grisly History of Nottinghamshire in 10 Spine Chilling Chapters' by Michael Cox has been Highly Commended in the 2012 Alan Ball Local History awards. The object of this prestigious award, administered by the Library Services Trust, is to encourage local history publishing by public libraries and local authorities. The citation stated that "the judges were very impressed by the originality of the topic and its treatment and found the text by Michael Cox particularly striking." The award has previously been won by Nottinghamshire County Council: most recently in 2010 and in 2006 by Bernard Heathcote for his previous book 'Viewing the Lifeless Body' which was a study of Coroners' inquests held in public houses.

COUNTRY PARKS

Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre

16. A liaison meeting was held with Discovery Attractions (DA) on 15 January to review progress on their compliance with the contract documentation, designs, funding and timescales.
17. DA have now created their Project Team which the County Council has approved and a good deal of preparatory work is under way in respect of the biodiversity and ecological surveys that have to accompany their planning application which is now scheduled for late summer. All work being undertaken is at their own costs and risks.
18. Discovery Attractions and their funders are putting the finishing touches to their financial proposals which will form part of the Development and Operating Agreements which are now likely to be signed off by 31 March 2013.
19. Immediately afterwards, Discovery Attractions and the County Council attended a well supported meeting of the Edwinstowe Business Forum at which the proposals to date were explained to the local business community, followed by a question and answer session. It is evident that there is ample opportunity for good relationships to be established between the village and the new attraction and that an agreed goal of encouraging more visitors to Edwinstowe is mutually beneficial.
20. Furthermore, there will be an opportunity for the Business Forum and Discovery Attractions to link in with the County Council in the planning, preparation and delivery of the 2013 Robin Hood Festival (August 5-11).

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the report be noted.

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